Ministry of Government Relations

Annual Report for 2016-17

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Government of Saskatchewan

Table of Contents

Letters of Transmittal 1

Introduction 2

Ministry Overview 3

Progress in 2016-17 4

2016-17 Financial Overview 14

For More Information 18

Appendices 19

Appendix A: Acts and Regulations 19

Appendix B: Organizational Chart 21

Letters of Transmittal

The Honourable Donna Harpauer Minister of Government Relations and Minister Responsible for First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs

Her Honour, the Honourable Vaughn Solomon Schofield,
Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan

May It Please Your Honour:

I respectfully submit the Annual Report of the Ministry of Government Relations for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2017.

The ministry's report is an account of our government's delivery of programs and services that help build capacity in municipal governments, support the public safety measures of Saskatchewan communities, and enable the greater participation of First Nations and Métis people and northern residents in the provincial economy. The ministry advances those programs and services in the context of the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth* and the government's overall duty to increased accountability, responsible management of public expenditures, and fulfillment of its commitments.

The ministry had another successful year in working with other levels of government and community partners to plan for, and respond to the opportunities and challenges of growth. Those accomplishments are described in the pages that follow.

Donna Harpauer
Minister of Government Relations and
Minister Responsible for First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs

Tammy Kirkland Deputy Minister of Government Relations and Deputy Minister of First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs

The Honourable Donna Harpauer
Minister of Government Relations and
Minister Responsible for First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs

Dear Minister:

I have the honour of submitting the Annual Report of the Ministry of Government Relations for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2017.

The ministry has a broad mandate that encompasses municipal relations, infrastructure investments, public safety concerns, and Indigenous engagement. Delivering on that mandate requires a dedicated team and I would like to thank the staff of the ministry for their commitment and hard work over the past year. I extend my appreciation as well to the diverse municipal, government and community partners who contributed to our success.

The report has been prepared and carefully reviewed under my direction, and I acknowledge responsibility for the accuracy, completeness and reliability of the information contained herein. I also accept responsibility for the financial administration and management control of the ministry.

Tammy Kirkland
Deputy Minister of Government Relations and
Deputy Minister of First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs

Introduction

This annual report for the Ministry of Government Relations presents the ministry's results for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2017. It provides results of publicly committed strategies, key actions and performance measures identified in the *Ministry of Government Relations Plan for 2016-17*. It also reflects progress toward commitments from the Government Direction for 2016-17: Keeping Saskatchewan Strong, the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth – Vision 2020 and Beyond*, and throne speeches as well as from the ministry.

The annual report demonstrates the ministry's commitment to effective public performance reporting, transparency and accountability to the public.

Alignment with Government's Direction

The ministry's activities in 2016-17 align with the government's vision and four goals:

Saskatchewan's Vision

"... to be the best place in Canada – to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family and to build a life."

- **Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people**
- **Meeting the challenges of growth**
- **Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people**
- **Delivering responsive and responsible government**

Together, all ministries and agencies support the achievement of the government's four goals and work towards a secure and prosperous Saskatchewan.

Ministry Overview

The following is the mandate statement of the Ministry of Government Relations:

With responsibility for municipal relations, public safety, and First Nations, Métis and northern affairs, the ministry actively engages a diverse range of partners and stakeholders to: effectively plan for and respond to the opportunities and challenges of growth; provide leadership and direction so that integrated public safety services are available to communities and their residents; and support responsive and responsible government.

The organizational structure aligns with the ministry's mandate. The key functional areas of the ministry are:

- Municipal Relations and Northern Engagement
- Emergency Management and Fire Safety
- Corporate Services, Public Safety Standards and Disaster Recovery
- Office of the Provincial Interlocutor
- Lands and Consultation
- Policy and Program Services
- Communications

The ministry had 244.1 full-time equivalent (FTE) budgeted positions for 2016-17. Actual FTE utilization was 278.7. This represents an over-utilization of 34.6 FTEs. The over-utilization primarily reflects term staff who process claims pertaining to the Provincial Disaster Assistance Program.

The ministry has eight locations across the province, with staff in Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, La Ronge, Buffalo Narrows, Estevan, Yorkton and Swift Current.

Progress in 2016-17

Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people

Meeting the challenges of growth

Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people

Delivering responsive and responsible government

Strategic priority in support of the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth*: be an enabling partner in building safe, healthy and vibrant communities

Ministry Goal

Saskatchewan communities are prepared for disasters and emergencies

Strategy

Continually improve provincial emergency preparedness, mitigation, interoperability, response and recovery

Key Actions and Results

Implement a province-wide public alerting system which will provide critical information on emergency events as they are occurring.

- SaskAlert, Saskatchewan's emergency public alerting program, provides critical information on emergency events as they are occurring so citizens can take action to protect themselves, their families and their property. Across Saskatchewan, 353 communities currently participate in SaskAlert. In 2016-17, 138 alerts were issued.
- The ministry launched the SaskAlert app and website in June 2016, providing another way for citizens to receive information. The app was immediately well received, being downloaded over 30,000 times in July 2016.

Develop and implement a provincial disaster mitigation strategy to help identify, address and prioritize Saskatchewan disaster mitigation needs.

- A flood and natural hazards risk assessment is underway. The Saskatchewan Research Council has been contracted to carry out the work, through funding from the provincial and federal governments under the National Disaster Mitigation Program.
- The ministry led an initiative that informed other ministries and government agencies on the Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements (DFAA) mitigation program, and is following up to ensure eligible projects are identified and submitted for consideration by Public Safety Canada. In the event of a large-scale natural disaster where response and recovery costs exceed what provinces or territories could reasonably be expected to bear on their own, the Government of Canada provides financial assistance to provincial and territorial governments through the DFAA.

Conduct a review of the government's Civil Service Reserve Team that supplements established emergency response efforts.

- The government-wide Civil Service Reserve Team, established in 2015, is currently under review, with potential changes to be implemented by 2018 to assist emergency response efforts.

Review and enhance emergency plans and infrastructure for communities in northern Saskatchewan.

- Emergency plans are regularly updated in consultation with local stakeholders and ministry staff. Emergency contact information was updated following the 2016 municipal elections for northern communities, and has been provided to the ministry and the local health regions.
- Emergency plans for all five water treatment plants owned and operated on behalf of the Northern Saskatchewan Administrative District have been updated in 2016-17, as required by the Water Security Agency.

Facilitate the development of support services and/or mutual aid agreements for First Nations emergency services, including participation in the Provincial Public Safety Telecommunication Network, dispatching and data collection systems.

- The ministry continues to provide emergency services to First Nations under an existing Letter of Understanding with the federal government. Negotiations continue on a longer-term Memorandum of Understanding with Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada regarding services provided. A formal agreement will provide better clarity about the province's emergency response roles and responsibilities to provide services to First Nations on behalf of the federal government. It will specify reimbursement costs the province will receive as compensation for each type of service.

Additional 2016-17 Results

- Citizens of the northern community of La Loche are still recovering and healing in the aftermath of the tragic shootings that claimed four lives there on January 22, 2016. The provincial government played a critical role in helping coordinate the initial response to the tragedy. Provincial and federal officials have been working with community leaders ever since on solutions to the problems that have arisen from this incident, as well as to the broader problems facing the community.

  The Ministry of Government Relations has been active on this response, chairing or co-chairing a senior Cabinet committee, a deputy ministers' task force, and a working group of assistant deputy ministers. The government has provided additional health, education and infrastructure support to the community since the shootings, and in consultation with La Loche and northern leaders, is working on a longer-term strategy focused on improved health services, strengthened education and vocational training, new infrastructure investments, and increased housing.
- The ministry helped coordinate the many ministries, Crown corporations and agencies responding to the Husky Oil spill in the province in July 2016. The ministry's experience in coordinating large emergency events helped to mitigate redundancies, delays and miscommunication. The ministry also provided on-the-ground coordination to deliver alternate water supplies to several communities affected by the oil spill. Ministry personnel, working with communities, arranged for water hauling, overland water lines, river damming, and bottled water distribution.
- The ministry led a process that brought together several ministries to identify DFAA eligible costs for 2015 wildfires. Through its Provincial Disaster Assistance Program, the ministry submitted an application to DFAA for reimbursement of these costs, which received federal Order in Council approval. This was the first DFAA application from Saskatchewan for eligible costs (imminent threat costs) related to forest fires. The ministry hosted an advisory audit with the federal government regarding DFAA eligible costs for the 2015 wildfires, and received an advance payment of $29.7 million.

Strategy

Engage with and provide education and training to communities in order to improve community safety

Key Actions and Results

Support greater public safety in Saskatchewan communities by reviewing municipal emergency plans and advising on potential improvements.

- The ministry's emergency services officers are in regular contact with communities and provide guidance in preparing emergency plans and mitigation efforts. They advise communities of equipment caches available for use during emergency response, and how and when to best use that equipment.

Work with municipalities to identify challenges and opportunities in responding to emergencies.

- Emergency services officers provide training in the use of the Provincial Public Safety Telecommunications Network to equip communities to communicate during response. The network provides public safety users such as fire departments, police services, emergency medical services, emergency preparedness and volunteer search and rescue groups with interoperable radio communications that allows them to communicate with each other during times of emergency.
- Emergency services officers routinely gather information about community preparedness and response capability. This data helps to identify local capacity and gaps to target areas in need of further support.

Collaborate with the Ministry of Environment to establish fire management and containment plans for northern communities.

- Ministry staff continue to work with Ministry of Environment staff and other provincial partners on the improvement of fire management for northern communities, as identified in lessons learned following the 2015 northern wildfires and through other best practices examples.
- The two ministries collaborated to establish fuel management plans, set up fire breaks, and train community leaders in several northern resorts and settlements. The two ministries and northern residents are engaged in ongoing planning for the upcoming wildfire season and in improving wildfire response capabilities.
- Planning for Growth North is a federal Gas Tax revenue and Northern Municipal Trust Account program that employs community planners to work with northern municipalities. Its staff have drafted 11 northern settlement development controls which include objectives and policies for wildfire safety planning.

Work with partners to provide fire prevention programming and training for pre-school and elementary school students to increase fire safety awareness.

- The ministry continues to distribute "Learn Not to Burn" materials provided by the Canadian Council of Fire Marshals and Fire Commissioners. "Learn Not to Burn" is a comprehensive fire safety curriculum for use in schools that uses proven educational strategies that incorporate a philosophy of teaching positive, practical fire safety messaging to children.

Performance Measure

Number of municipalities participating in emergency management data collection programs.

Training in the updated Fire Data Management records system has been provided to 650 individuals in 224 fire departments in the province. This includes training for 150 individuals in 51 fire departments in the 2016-17 fiscal year. This data management system has undergone some significant changes and improvements in the past year, allowing the ministry to more accurately track fire incidents and related data. Accurate and complete data will help in making evidence-based decisions about fire suppression needs in Saskatchewan.

Ministry Goal

Capacity and infrastructure effectively meet the needs of communities and their growth

Strategy

Enhance the effectiveness and capacity of local governance

Key Actions and Results

Implement amendments to municipal legislation and regulations that position municipalities to better plan for and deal with growth and development issues and challenges.

- Extensive amendments to municipal legislation and regulations have been made relating to conflicts of interest, which can arise particularly in respect of growth and development.
- A new code of ethics for municipal elected officials has been put in place.
- The authority of the provincial ombudsman has been expanded to include complaints about municipal governments.
- The ministry initiated a survey of municipalities' experiences in the fall 2016 local government elections. Input from the survey will help determine if amendments to legislation and regulations governing local elections are needed.

Partner with municipal associations and other parties to design and deliver workshops on general municipal administration to municipal officials.

- The ministry worked with eight organizations to deliver 34 training/information sessions (two via webinar) on general municipal administration topics (e.g. municipal tax policy, municipal elections) to 3,586 municipal officials.

Partner with northern stakeholders including First Nations and Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada to pursue strategic infrastructure improvements that increase cost-effectiveness and enhance public safety.

- Work is ongoing with elected and appointed officials of La Loche and Clearwater River Dene Nation to develop an official community plan for La Loche that effectively engages the First Nation, integrates Public Safety Canada's community safety plan, and supports critical partnerships with neighbouring municipalities including the ministry-administered Northern Saskatchewan Administration District.
- The ministry's Northern Water and Sewer Infrastructure Program has 22 active projects, with a total estimated cost of $6 million. Four of these systems are shared between northern municipalities and neighbouring First Nations communities.

Additional 2016-17 Result

- The Gas Tax Fund (GTF) Asset Management sub-committee, comprising federal, provincial, municipal and sector association representatives, undertook a survey of municipalities to determine their current status in developing and implementing asset management plans. Every municipality participating in the GTF completed the survey. Results from the survey were used to develop tiers, targets and measurements for future reporting on progress being made by municipalities in developing and implementing asset management.

Strategy

Provide long-term, predictable funding to municipalities to support provincial interests in municipal priorities, including municipal infrastructure

Key Actions and Results

Provide the equivalent of one full point of the Provincial Sales Tax to the municipal sector via municipal revenue sharing.

- The government distributed $271.3 million in unconditional municipal revenue sharing to municipalities in 2016-17 – equivalent to one full point of Provincial Sales Tax (from 2014-15 Public Accounts).

Gather, review and analyze municipal data and information (e.g. municipal financial data) to inform decision-making that impacts provincial and local government.

- The ministry collected and reviewed the 2016 mill rate returns and the 2015 financial statements for all municipalities, and the 2015 water works financial overviews for approximately 445 municipalities. This data and analysis are used to inform internal policy decisions and grant application reviews, ensure compliance with legislative requirements and accounting standards, identify areas for capacity building, and inform matters of provincial interests in municipal priorities.

Partner with the federal government and the municipal sector to ensure prudent and effective investment of federal/provincial infrastructure funding.

- Investing in public infrastructure helps ensure that citizens have safe drinking water, reliable wastewater systems and high-quality public transit. Working with the federal government, the provincial government made significant infrastructure investments through several programs in 2016-17: programs that support job creation, middle class growth and economic sustainability.
- The New Building Canada Fund (NBCF), a federal-provincial infrastructure program that encourages investments in infrastructure projects that contribute to economic growth, job creation and productivity, was introduced in 2014. In 2016-17, 18 projects were announced, committing $148.8 million in federal/provincial funding. These projects were in addition to the 37 NBCF projects announced in 2015-16. Payments totaling $17.6 million were made in 2016-17 to projects under this program.
- The Clean Water Wastewater Fund (CWWF) was introduced in 2016-17 to target projects that will provide communities with more reliable water, wastewater and storm water infrastructure. In 2016-17, 36 projects were announced, committing $71.1 million in federal/provincial funding. The government provided $1.3 million to these CWWF projects in 2016-17.
- An infrastructure payment of $10 million was made to the City of Saskatoon in 2016-17 as the first instalment toward the provincial government's $50 million commitment to the North Commuter Parkway Bridge project.
- Funding of $3.5 million was provided to support paratransit services under the Transit Assistance for People with Disabilities Program. Operating funding of $3 million was provided to 78 municipalities and $550,000 in capital funding was provided to purchase 10 paratransit fleet vehicles.
- Four projects received $600,000 in funding in 2016-17 under the now-ended federal-provincial Building Canada Fund – Communities Component program.
- The ministry provided $600,000 in funding in 2016-17 under the now-ended Saskatchewan Infrastructure Growth Initiative to subsidize interest on municipal loans for 27 infrastructure projects related to growth.

Strategy

Enable and promote effective and safe building facilities and equipment

Key Actions and Results

Pursue the harmonization of the building codes adoption process with other western provinces.

- Building construction is a significant driver of the Canadian economy, annually accounting for approximately $80 billion in investment, five per cent of the nation's gross domestic product and over 900,000 jobs. Harmonization of codes and standards between jurisdictions helps ensure this economic activity continues, by removing or reducing barriers to trade, investment and labour mobility. Harmonization is consistent with objectives of internal trade agreements and the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth*. The ministry continues to pursue this harmonization initiative through its involvement in the Code Development System Review Process led by the National Research Council with participation of the Canadian Commission on Building and Fire Codes and the Provincial/Territorial Policy Advisory Committee on Codes.

Additional 2016-17 Result

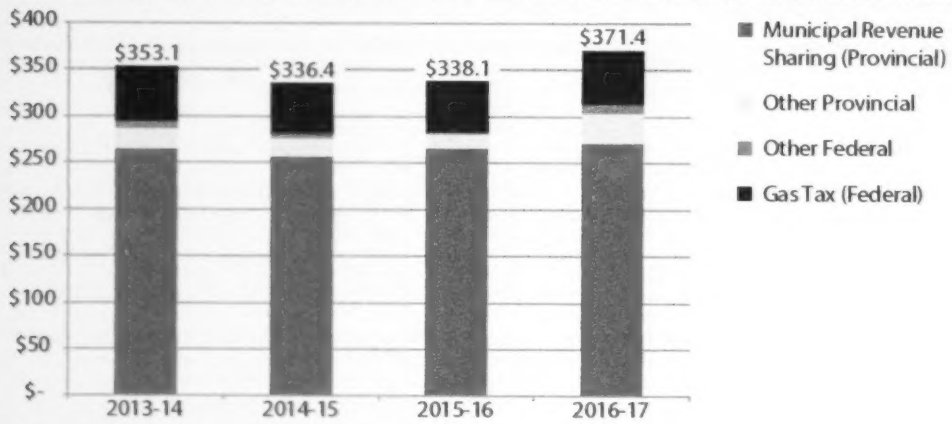
- The subdivision of land is a key step for investment in economic growth as it precedes actual development. The elevated trend for lot development in the past eight years represents significant investment in land and property within the province. Through the Integrated Subdivision Approval Program, the ministry reviewed municipal/developer servicing agreements to ensure adequate infrastructure arrangements were in place to service the 998 subdivision applications approved for 2,327 new commercial, industrial, and residential lots.

Performance Measures

Annual municipal funding.

Funding is provided to municipalities through several programs to support provincial interests in municipal priorities, including municipal infrastructure and revenue sharing.

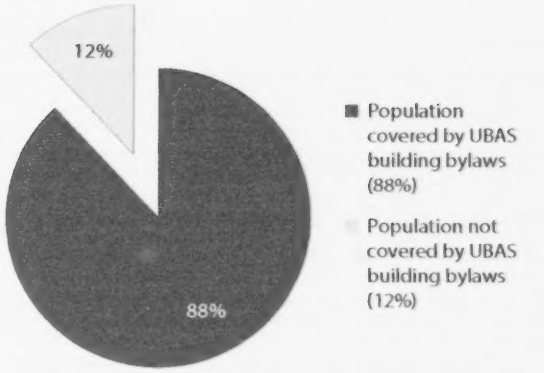
Funding Provided by Municipal Infrastructure and Finance for Local Infrastructure (millions)



- The government distributed over $271 million in municipal revenue sharing to municipalities in 2016-17. Municipalities can use this unconditional funding for local operational needs, such as staff certification to operate a water treatment plant, or operating costs associated with providing transit services. These grants may also be used for capital requirements, such as road and bridge construction or matching federal and provincial funding on an approved infrastructure project.
- In addition to municipal revenue sharing, the government provided over $32 million in provincial funding for municipal operating costs and for new and continuing capital projects. This included almost $23.5 million in funding through provincial-only programs and nearly $8.6 million in provincial funding through programs that were cost-shared with the federal government. In 2016-17, across all cost-shared and provincial-only programs, new projects with total eligible costs of more than $368 million were announced.
- In 2016-17 the government also distributed over $9.5 million in federal funding, primarily for cost-shared projects included in the above-mentioned projects. This amount only includes federal funding that was processed through the ministry; there was also federal funding directly paid to municipalities.
- The provincial government administers the federally funded Gas Tax Fund. The program is permanent and will be indexed at two per cent per year, applied in $100-million increments, providing predictable, long-term, stable funding for municipalities. Participating municipalities are eligible to receive semi-annual payments each year under the program, on a per capita basis, for their municipal infrastructure and capacity building projects, subject to the terms and conditions of their agreements. In 2016-17, 746 participating Saskatchewan municipalities received $58.5 million from the Gas Tax Fund.

Percentage of population covered by building bylaws.

This measure demonstrates municipal leadership in public safety through the adoption of building bylaws pursuant to *The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Act* (UBAS) and enforcement of building standards that promote construction of safe buildings. Municipalities with building bylaws in place represent 88.1 per cent of the province's population (based on the 2016 Census), an increase of 1.5 per cent from the figure for 2015-16. Ongoing efforts by the ministry, as well as inter-ministry and agency co-ordination, will increase the implementation of building bylaws by municipalities.



Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people

Meeting the challenges of growth

Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people

Delivering responsive and responsible government

Strategic priority in support of the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth*: build relationships and develop partnerships with and between municipalities, First Nations and Métis communities, and industry that advance the government's agenda

Ministry Goal

Communities and individuals are engaged and well positioned to benefit from the opportunities and address the challenges of economic and population growth

Strategy

Enhance regional and municipal planning to address economic growth opportunities and challenges

Key Actions and Results

Lead a regional planning dialogue to discuss successes and challenges with planning commissions and other regional planning groups. Develop workshop or training resources based on the information gathered at the regional planning dialogue.

- Ministry staff met with and provided advice to planning districts to improve operational procedures to facilitate growth and development. Staff worked with several planning district commissions to improve commission members' skills and abilities to advance regional development, create consistent decision-making processes between municipalities to improve investor certainty, and build upon the inter-municipal relationships to improve regional infrastructure services which support investment opportunities.

Provide ongoing support and technical assistance to regional planning organizations to help improve their ability to support development and advance the provincial growth agenda.

- Ministry staff improved local knowledge and understanding of regional planning and planning districts through ten presentations to elected municipal representatives, municipal administrators, First Nation leaders and professional planners.
- Staff also provided general guidance and advice for inquiries from planning districts to facilitate growth and development.

Coordinate the expansion of the Rapid Growth Communities team, enabling it to work with additional municipalities experiencing rapid growth.

- The team maintained consistent communication with approximately 90 municipalities, encouraging them to undertake self-assessments of their growth readiness (e.g. Do they have properly zoned land for future development; up-to-date official community plans, emergency plans, and building bylaws; effective pricing of water and wastewater services?).
- Officials held a team progress and planning session, which resulted in restructuring the team, and changing its title to the Readiness for Growth Communities team. Team composition was adjusted from 13 ministries and agencies to six, and efforts continue to enhance the team's effectiveness.
- Plans for direct outreach to priority regions in spring 2017 are underway. The team is working to optimally align its outreach to help ministries and agencies achieve their objectives.

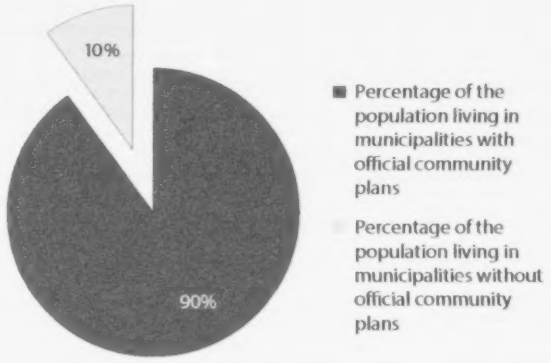
Performance Measures

Planning districts established.

The ministry encourages municipalities to engage in regional planning activities such as establishing planning districts, helping build municipal sector capacity, mediating inter-municipal disputes and delivering cost-effective services and infrastructure. In 2016-17, the ministry approved the creation of one new planning district.

Percentage of the population living in municipalities with official community plans.

Official community plans (OCPs) set out policies to govern land use and development, outline the municipalities' economic growth strategies, encourage environmental stewardship, plan sustainable infrastructure, support recreational opportunities and address community interests. Ninety per cent of Saskatchewan's population lives in municipalities that have adopted such plans, marking a major increase from the 75 per cent adoption rate in 2009-10 and surpassing the ministry's 2016-17 target of 88 per cent. In 2016-17, 112 new regional and official community plans and 63 new zoning bylaws were approved. The percentage of municipalities with OCPs has also risen to 52 per cent, up from 36 per cent in 2009-10.


10%
90%
Percentage of the population living in municipalities with official community plans
Percentage of the population living in municipalities without official community plans

With disaster mitigation planning a requirement of new OCPs, the ministry safeguarded approximately $100 million of development from flooding and slope instability in 2016-17.

Ministry Goal

Improve outcomes for First Nations, Métis, and northern communities

Strategy

Deliver programs and support the government in meeting its commitments that align with First Nations, Métis, and northern needs

Key Actions and Results

Coordinate intergovernmental Aboriginal relations on government's initiatives to improve outcomes for First Nations and Métis people.

- The ministry coordinates the broad provincial responses to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. The Government of Saskatchewan is committed to working toward reconciliation with First Nations and Métis people by building on successes and adopting practical solutions to address the legacy of residential schools. During the fiscal year the government reported on the progress it has made in addressing 26 of the 34 Calls to Action that apply to provinces and territories.
- The ministry's First Nations and Métis Community Engagement Projects initiative supported a number of innovative projects. Provincial funding leveraged non-government funding at a ratio of 1:12. Here are some project examples.
  - Big Brothers Big Sisters of Saskatchewan led a partnership to build two new mentorship programs that aim to address the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and seek to close gaps in educational achievement and social well-being of Aboriginal youth in the province.
  - *Engaging Young Leaders* has helped 55 at-risk young Aboriginal people build leadership, teamwork and community mobilization skills to prevent interpersonal violence. *Engaging Young Leaders* will expand a youth leadership and violence prevention program to additional communities in phase three of the initiative.
  - The File Hills First Nations Police Service, the Balcarres Community School and Saskatchewan Polytechnic worked in partnership on a poster project that included building valuable community connections between students and positive role models. These connections create relationships that continue beyond the project.
- Together with the Ministry of Social Services, the ministry leads the province's engagement with the federal government and First Nations on the new federal approach to Jordan's Principle. This initiative makes sure First Nations children under 18 years of age have equal access to health and social services without delay or disruption, regardless of where they live in Saskatchewan.

- *The Saskatchewan Treaty Land Entitlement Framework Agreement, 1992* and subsequent Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) Agreements create a comprehensive framework to address the constitutional obligation to settle outstanding First Nations land claims in Saskatchewan. Land claim settlements and reserve creation increase First Nations' opportunities for economic development and employment.
- Ministry officials participated in the TLE Joint Working Group with the federal government and the FSIN in support of implementation of the TLE Agreements. The cities of Regina and Saskatoon were also involved in the planning. The TLE Agreements involve the Canadian and Saskatchewan governments and 33 First Nations and address the land debt owed to the First Nations and promised under Treaty. The group was successful in sharing information and promoting opportunities for relationship building and networking through three conferences held on the theme of "Prosperity through Partnerships: Communities Coming Together." The conferences were well attended by First Nations, rural and urban municipalities and other interested parties.
- Ministry officials also delivered TLE presentations at the Saskatchewan Aboriginal Land Technicians Workshop and the Pacific and Business Law Institute. These presentations helped to raise awareness about the TLE agreements and the reserve land creation process.
- During the reporting period 10,678 acres of Crown land were transferred to reserve status, bringing the total amount of reserve acres established under the TLE Agreements since 1992 to 864,363 of the potential 2.3 million acres.

Collaborate with partners to advance the priorities of northern communities.

- The ministry provides secretariat support to, and is a co-chair of the Embracing Life Committee, a coalition of 17 federal, provincial, Aboriginal and regional service delivery agencies. The committee focuses on suicide prevention and health promotion in northern Saskatchewan. It has also supported youth and service providers to attend suicide and trauma conferences and workshops.
- The Ministries of Government Relations and Environment continued to co-manage the mine surface lease agreements which require best efforts from northern mines to engage, train, employ and contract northerners. The agreements also require the mines to contribute to public reporting on their initiatives.
  - The ministry continues to publish an annual Northern Socioeconomic Benefits Summary, based on reports from northern mining operations as required by mine surface lease agreements. The report for 2015, filed in 2016, indicates that northern mines employed 1,746 northern residents that year, slightly more than half of their work force of 3,390. Mines also purchased $388 million in goods and services from northern companies and joint ventures.
- The ministry represented Saskatchewan at the Northern Development Ministers Forum. Saskatchewan led two of four research projects for the forum in 2016-17: one to streamline and strengthen its terms of reference and procedures for the forum, and the other to identify the criteria that support good outcomes from 'benefit agreements' between resource industries and northern communities.
- The ministry continues to work with officials from Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada to assist several northern communities to build a mutual understanding among stakeholders of the TLE process, and related risks, impacts and opportunities.

Additional 2016-17 Result

Through the 2002 Gaming Framework Agreement between the Province of Saskatchewan and the FSIN, and *The Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation Act*, the ministry distributes profits generated by the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority and the Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation to the First Nations Trust, six Community Development Corporations, and the Clarence Campeau Development Fund (operating as the Métis Development Fund). The ministry distributed $78.13 million in payments as outlined below:

- $54.8 million for the First Nations Trust, which supports the First Nations Addictions and Rehabilitation Foundation, and distributes funding to First Nations communities in Saskatchewan;
- $19.8 million for Community Development Corporations, which support social, economic and business development proposals located in communities surrounding Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority casinos; and,
- $3.5 million for the Clarence Campeau Development Fund, which supports Métis economic development.

Performance Measure

Number of duty to consult workshops held to raise awareness of Saskatchewan's First Nations and Métis Consultation Participation Fund.

The provincial government's *First Nation and Métis Consultation Policy Framework* sets out the government's commitment to fulfilling its legal duty to consult and accommodate First Nation and Métis communities in advance of decisions or actions that have the potential to adversely impact the exercise of:

- Treaty and Aboriginal rights such as the right to hunt, fish and trap for food on unoccupied Crown land and other land to which a community has a right-of-access for these purposes; and
- Traditional uses of land and resources such as the gathering of plants for food and medicinal purposes and carrying out ceremonial and spiritual observances and practices on unoccupied Crown land and other land to which a community has a right of access for these purposes.

In 2016-17, the ministry delivered nine duty to consult workshops to 136 employees to facilitate consistent implementation of the framework. The training better positions officials to work with First Nation and Métis communities to help them understand the practical implications of proposed actions and decisions on their Treaty and Aboriginal rights and traditional uses, discuss accommodations to avoid, minimize or mitigate potential adverse impacts to these rights and traditional uses, and advise them of the opportunities for funding. This process can effectively inform decisions and improve relationships.

First Nation and Métis communities that have received notifications from government that the duty to consult has been triggered may apply to the First Nations and Métis Consultation Participation Fund for financial assistance to support their participation in government consultation processes.

Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people

Meeting the challenges of growth

Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people

Delivering responsive and responsible government

Strategic priority in support of the ministry's mandate and the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth*: support responsive and responsible government

Ministry Goal

Support municipal governance through enhancements to policy, legislation, and regulations

Strategy

Ensure a fair and effective property tax regime

Key Actions and Results

In preparation for the 2017 property tax revaluation, develop options for percentage of value and property class decisions.

- Following detailed analysis and consultations with a broad range of stakeholders by the ministry, the government made a decision to revise the percentages of value for residential property and pasture land to help cushion the tax shifts predicted to result from the 2017 revaluation.
- A new *Education Property Tax Act* was prepared, in consultation with municipal and education sector stakeholders, over the summer and fall of 2016 and introduced as budget legislation in the spring 2017 session. The new Act will redirect education property tax collected by municipalities from school divisions to the provincial government. The Ministry of Finance will receive these revenues, and they will be redirected to school divisions through the K-12 operating grants by the Ministry of Education.
- The ministry continues on behalf of government to monitor municipalities in their collection and payment of education property tax.

Strategy

Prepare legislative and regulatory changes to address provincial and ministry priorities and to respond to sector and public concerns

Key Actions and Results

Review and improve municipal and public safety legislation and regulations to meet the evolving needs of municipal, public safety, other stakeholders, the province and the public.

- Saskatchewan is committed to ensuring consistency with the National Building Code, 2010 (NBC) and its standards. However, the government understands some of these standards may cause severe financial implications to operators of alternative family care homes dedicated to serving many Saskatchewan seniors. The cost of meeting the code requirements was estimated to be between $14 million and $18 million. To balance the challenges of occupant safety, cost of implementation and retaining operators, a regulatory amendment to the *Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards (Sprinklers) Amendment Regulations, 2016* was put in force in June 2016 to relax fire sprinkler requirements for homes with five or fewer occupants. The regulation amendments will save approximately 450 operators an estimated $35,500 each, allowing businesses to provide quality care and safe housing for Saskatchewan seniors. The ministry worked with the Ministries of Social Services and Health to develop fire safety policy documents for homes supplementary to the National Building Code, including annual fire drills arranged with a fire inspector, installation of heat detectors in furnace rooms, and prohibition of candles in resident rooms.
- Extensive work is underway as part of the ministry's Red Tape Committee-approved work plan to update the *Amusement Ride Safety Regulations, Passenger and Freight Elevator Regulations* and *Boiler and Pressure Vessel Regulations*. Stakeholder consultations have been undertaken for each of these.

Make strategic amendments to municipal legislation and regulations that position municipalities to better plan for and deal with growth and development issues and challenges.

- The government made extensive amendments to municipal legislation and regulations related to conflicts of interest, and also put in place a new code of ethics for municipal elected officials.
- The government approved new regulations under *The Municipalities Act* to set new thresholds for creation of new hamlets, villages and resort villages. The regulations also required initiation of restructuring procedures for municipalities that fall below a population threshold of 100 for two censuses and are unable to comply with statutory requirements for municipalities.

Ministry Goal

Programs and services are client-centered, cost effective and efficient

Strategy

Review and strengthen ministry programs and services in response to opportunities and public demand

Key Actions and Results

Conduct program reviews for all ministry programs to ensure and enhance their effectiveness and efficiency.

- The ministry completed several program reviews and Lean continuous improvement events that focused on improvements to program efficiencies and effectiveness so that those programs could better serve their respective customers.
- The Provincial Disaster Assistance Program (PDAP) is designed to help residents, small businesses, agricultural operations, communal organizations, non-profit organizations, parks and communities recover from the effects of natural disasters, including flooding, tornadoes, plow winds and other severe weather. The ministry has made improvements to PDAP processes that will reduce administrative expenses and reduce the amount of time required for claimants to receive disaster assistance. The improvements included electronic upload of adjuster information to the PDAP system and electronic deposit of benefits to a claimant's bank account.
  - During the 2016-17 fiscal year PDAP approved 75 municipal designations and received 603 claims. PDAP successfully closed 81.5 per cent of these claims and exceeded service standards for processing claims.

2016-17 Financial Overview

Financial Results

Expense:

The 2016-17 appropriation budget was $510.3 million. Actual expenditures were approximately $526.4 million. This represents an over-expenditure of $16.1 million. This increase primarily reflects:

- higher than anticipated claim and program administration costs for the Provincial Disaster Assistance Program ($30.0 million);

partially offset by:

- lower than anticipated infrastructure grant payments ($11.3 million);
- lower Gaming Agreement payments ($0.7 million); and,
- net savings across the ministry, primarily due to vacancy management and expenditure restraint efforts ($1.9 million).

Supplementary funding of $28.2 million was provided to Government Relations at mid-year to address pressures within the Provincial Disaster Assistance Program, the Emergency Management and Fire Safety Branch, and increased gaming agreement payments to reconcile 2015-16 actual gaming revenues. Gaming agreement payments were subsequently decreased at third quarter to reflect a forecasted decrease in 2016-17 gaming revenues. Overall, $12.1 million or 2.25 per cent of available funding was not spent.

Revenue:

The 2016-17 revenue budget was $73.6 million. Actual revenue was $183.5 million. This represents an increase of $109.9 million over budget. This increase is primarily attributed to:

- net increase in revenue from the federal government under Disaster Financial Assistance ($96.0 million);
- higher than anticipated refunds to the General Revenue Fund, primarily for the Provincial Disaster Assistance Program where actual claim settlements were lower than the estimated accounts payable that had been set up in prior years ($11.0 million);
- increased revenue for the Gas Tax Program attributed to the federal government top-up ($1.2 million);
- increased revenue for the New Building Canada Fund attributed to higher than expected Small Communities Fund approvals and projects proceeding faster than anticipated ($1.1 million);
- increased revenue for the new Clean Water and Wastewater Fund and Public Transit Infrastructure Fund programs ($1.1 million);
- increased revenue for the Emergency Management and Fire Safety Branch attributed to reimbursements from Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada for emergency responses on First Nation reserves ($0.6 million); and,
- miscellaneous revenue ($0.3 million);

partially offset by:

- reduced revenue pertaining to Emergency Management on First Nations as the agreement between the federal and provincial governments was not signed as expected in 2016-17 ($1.0 million); and,
- reduced federal transfers under Building Canada Fund – Communities Component attributed to savings realized on final claims received from recipients ($0.4 million).

Full-Time Equivalents (FTE)

The 2016-17 full-time equivalent (FTE) budget was 244.1. Actual FTE utilization was 278.7. This represents an over-utilization of 34.6 FTEs. The over-utilization primarily reflects term staff who process claims pertaining to the Provincial Disaster Assistance Program.

Summary of Expenditures

The following table summarizes budgeted versus actual expenses by subvote and subprogram. Variance explanations are provided for all variances that are greater than five per cent and $100,000.

In thousands of dollars Subvote/Subprogram	2016-17 Budget	2016-17 Actual	Variance Over/(Under)	Notes
Central Management and Services (GR01)	**9,676**	**9,090**	**(586)**	
Minister's Salary	49	49	0	
Executive Management	1,024	1,192	168	1
Central Services	5,819	5,172	(647)	1
Accommodations Services	2,784	2,677	(107)	
First Nations and Métis Engagement (GR12)	**81,810**	**80,889**	**(921)**	
First Nations and Métis Relations	2,439	2,248	(191)	1
Treaty Land Entitlement	335	136	(199)	2
First Nations and Métis Consultation Participation Fund	200	371	171	3
Métis Development Fund	3,216	3,499	283	4
First Nations Gaming Agreements	75,620	74,635	(985)	
Municipal and Northern Engagement (GR07)	**405,713**	**393,340**	**(12,373)**	
Urban Revenue Sharing	174,638	174,248	(390)	
Rural Revenue Sharing	76,749	76,858	109	
Northern Revenue Sharing	20,254	20,231	(23)	
New Building Canada Fund	28,400	17,627	(10,773)	5
Building Canada Fund – Communities Component	1,156	567	(589)	6
Saskatoon North Commuter Parkway Bridge	10,000	10,000	-	
Transit Assistance for People with Disabilities	3,537	3,537	-	
Grants-in-Lieu of Property Taxes	12,300	12,293	(7)	
Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency	10,850	10,850	-	
Saskatchewan Infrastructure Growth Initiative	604	554	(50)	
Municipal and Northern Relations	6,995	7,694	699	7
Gas Tax Program	60,140	58,881	(1,259)	
Regional Planning Authorities	90	-	(90)	
Saskatchewan Municipal Board (GR06)	**1,849**	**1,620**	**(229)**	
Public Safety (GR11)	**11,216**	**41,407**	**30,191**	
Emergency Management and Fire Safety	5,718	5,947	229	
Building Standards and Licensing	946	1,049	103	8
Provincial Disaster Assistance Program	2,772	32,795	30,023	9
Public Safety Telecommunications	1,780	1,616	(164)	10
Provincial Public Safety Telecommunications Network (GR13)	–	–	–	
Initial Appropriation and Actual Expenditures	**510,264**	**526,346**	**16,082**	
Supplementary Funding	28,194		(28,194)	
Total Appropriation	**538,458**	**526,346**	**(12,112)**	
Capital Asset Acquisitions	(1,780)	(1,618)	162	10
Capital Asset Amortization	2,639	2,762	123	
Total Expense	**539,317**	**527,490**	**(11,827)**	

Explanation of Major Variances:

1. Vacancy management and miscellaneous operating under-expenditures.
2. Tax loss compensation requirements less than budgeted due to the level of reserve land creation activity.
3. Increased transfer payments to reflect program requirements.
4. Over-expenditure attributed to higher than anticipated Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation revenues.
5. Under-expenditure attributed to revised projections received from recipients and delayed National Regional Project approvals.
6. Under-expenditure attributed to final claims received from recipients on eligible expenses.
7. Over-expenditure as a result of costs associated with the new Clean Water and Wastewater Fund program partially offset by vacancy management and miscellaneous operating under-expenditures.
8. Miscellaneous salaries and operating over-expenditure.
9. Costs to provide disaster assistance to claimants for 2016 and prior year claim adjustments.
10. Miscellaneous reduced capital spending.

Summary of Revenues

The ministry's major revenue relates to agreements with the federal government. All revenue collected is deposited in the General Revenue Fund. A summary of the ministry's 2016-17 budgeted revenue compared to actual revenue is presented below. Explanations are provided for all variances that are greater than $100,000.

in thousands of dollars Revenue Category	2016-17 Budget	2016-17 Actual	Variance Over/(Under)	Notes
Other Enterprise and Funds	**250**	**323**	**73**	
Sask911	250	323	73	
Other Licences and Permits	**988**	**1,076**	**88**	
Subdivision Fees	600	669	69	
Licensing Fees	388	407	19	
Sales, Services and Service Fees	**60**	**102**	**42**	
Debenture Authorization	35	31	(4)	
Miscellaneous Services	4	3	(1)	
Other Service Fees	21	66	45	
Documentation, Searches and Legal Services	-	2	2	
Other Miscellaneous Revenue	**4,005**	**15,041**	**11,036**	
Refunds – Previous Year's Expenditures	4,005	14,979	10,974	1
Casual/Other Revenue	-	62	62	
Other Federal/Provincial Agreements	**68,302**	**166,942**	**98,640**	
Gas Tax Program	59,104	60,294	1,190	2
Building Canada Fund – Communities Component	981	568	(413)	3
New Building Canada Fund	7,000	8,064	1,064	4
Clean Water and Wastewater Fund	-	1,029	1,029	5
Public Transit Infrastructure Fund	-	101	101	6
Emergency Management on First Nations	1,000	-	(1,000)	7
Emergency Management and Fire Safety	-	646	646	8
Disaster Financial Assistance	-	96,022	96,022	9
Employability Assistance	217	218	1	
Total Revenue	**73,605**	**183,484**	**109,879**	

Explanation of Major Variances:

1. Actual Provincial Disaster Assistance Program claim settlements lower than the estimated accounts payable from prior years.
2. Increased revenue attributed to the federal government top-up of the Gas Tax Program.
3. Reduced federal transfers attributed to savings realized on final claims received from recipients.
4. Increased revenue attributed to higher than expected Small Communities Fund approvals and projects proceeding faster than anticipated.
5. Increased revenue for the new Clean Water and Wastewater Fund program.
6. Increased revenue for the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund program.
7. Reduced revenue as the agreement between the federal and provincial governments was not signed as expected in 2016-17.
8. Increased revenue attributed to reimbursements from Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada for emergency responses on First Nation reserves.
9. Net increase in revenue from the federal government under Disaster Financial Assistance recognized as a result of disaster events from previous years and from flooding events in 2016.

For More Information

Additional information about the Ministry of Government Relations is available at:
http://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/government-structure/ministries/government-relations.

The website includes general and detailed information about the ministry, its key programs, special studies, and legislation for which the ministry is responsible.

For more information about Government Relations, or to provide feedback about our 2016-17 Annual Report or performance results, please contact us at:

Phone: (306) 798-6093 Email: communicationsgr@gov.sk.ca

Mailing address: Ministry of Government Relations, 1855 Victoria Avenue Regina, SK S4P 3T2

Appendices

Appendix A: Acts and Regulations

The Minister of Government Relations, who is also the Minister Responsible for First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs, is assigned the administration of the following Acts and Regulations, except insofar as another minister is assigned the administration of the Act:

- *The Amusement Ride Safety Act*
  - *The Amusement Ride Safety Regulations*
- *The Assessment Appraisers Act*
  - *The Assessment Appraisers Regulations*
- *The Assessment Management Agency Act*
  - *The Assessment Management Agency Regulations*
- *The Boiler and Pressure Vessel Act, 1999*
  - *The Boiler and Pressure Vessel Regulations*
- *The Border Areas Act*
- *The Cities Act*
  - *The Cities Regulations*
- *The City of Lloydminster Act*
  - *The Lloydminster Charter (Saskatchewan)*
- *The Community Planning Profession Act, 2013*
- *The Controverted Municipal Elections Act*
- *The Electrical Licensing Act*
  - *The Electrical Contractor's Guarantee Bond Regulations, 1988*
  - *The Electrical Licensing Fees Regulation*
  - *The Electrical Licensing Exemption Regulations*
- *The Emergency 911 System Act*
  - *The Public Safety Answering Point Regulations, 2011*
- *The Emergency Planning Act*
  - *The Provincial Disaster Assistance Program Regulations, 2011*
- *The Emergency Services Telecommunication Program Regulations*
- *The Fire Safety Act*
  - *The Fire Safety Regulations*
- *The Flin-Flon Extension of Boundaries Act, 1952*
- *The Gas Licensing Act*
  - *The Gas Licensing Regulations*
- *The Government Relations Administration Act*
  - except with respect to clause 3(1)(c) which is jointly assigned to the Minister of Government Relations and the Minister of the Economy
  - except with respect to subsection 3(2) which is jointly assigned to the Minister of the Economy and the Minister responsible for First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs
- *The Indian and Native Affairs Act*
  - except clause 7(b) which is jointly assigned to the Minister Responsible for First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs and the Minister of the Economy

- *The Local Government Election Act, 2015*
  - *The Local Government Election Regulations, 2015*
- *The Local Improvements Act, 1993*
  - *The Local Improvements Forms Regulations, 1991*
- *The Métis Act*
- *The Municipal Board Act*
  - *The Saskatchewan Municipal Board Fees Regulations*
  - *The Saskatchewan Municipal Board Member Qualification Regulations, 2003*
- *The Municipal Expropriation Act*
- *The Municipal Grants Act*
  - *The Municipal Grants Regulations*
- *The Municipal Tax Sharing (Potash) Act*
  - *General Regulations under The Municipal Tax Sharing (Potash) Act*
- *The Municipalities Act*
  - *The Municipalities Regulations*
- *The Northern Municipalities Act, 2010*
  - *The Northern Municipalities Regulations*
- *The Passenger and Freight Elevator Act*
  - *The Passenger and Freight Elevator Regulations, 2003*
- *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*
  - *The Subdivision Regulations, 2014*
  - *The Dedicated Lands Regulations, 2009*
  - *The Statements of Provincial Interest Regulations*
- *The Rural Municipal Administrators Act*
- *The Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation Act*, but only with respect to:
  - Part III.01; and
  - the powers, duties and functions conferred or imposed on the minister and the Minister of Finance pursuant to Part III.1
- *The Saskatchewan Natural Resources Transfer Agreement (Treaty Land Entitlement) Act*
- *The Tax Enforcement Act*
  - *The Tax Enforcement Regulations, 2015*
- *The Technical Safety Authority of Saskatchewan Act*
- *The Time Act*
  - *The Time Act General Regulations*
- *The Treaty Land Entitlement Implementation Act*
- *The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Act*
  - *The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Regulations*
  - *The Building and Accessibility Standards Administration Regulations*
- *The Urban Municipal Administrators Act*
- *The Urban Municipality Act, 1984*

Appendix B: Organizational Chart as of March 31, 2017